that it has to do with strict precepts and solemn sanctions. Nor is it to be forgotten, that this law with obligations reveals authoritatively the will of God. Again, as a faculty, the conscience is an arbiter ever ready to decide, a master ever ready to issue commands. As a sentiment, it furnishes pleasure, stirs up desire, and leads to activity. Nor is it unworthy of being remarked, that it is in its very nature connected both with the understanding and the feelings, partaking of the strength and stability of the one, and of the life and facility of the other. It is the " faculty of the heart/' and the " sentiment of the understanding." While thus linking itself with all parts of our nature, it speaks as one having authority to every other power and principle of the human mind. Were this " faculty of the heart" allowed its proper power, it would, in the name of the supreme' Governor, preserve for him—that is, for God—the place which he ought to have in every human head and heart.

SECT. V.—QUALITIES WHICH MUST MEET IN MORALLY RIGHT ACTION ON THE PART OF MAN.

The inquiry into the nature of the morally good is different from the inquiry into the nature of conscience, though the two have often been confounded.

The question, here started is, in what does virtue consist, what is its essence or the common quality found in all virtuous action ? We have never fallen in with a satisfactory answer to this question in all its generality. We suspect that a definition of virtue taken absolutely is beyond the faculties of man. Price and Stewart represent moral good as an original and simple quality seen at once and intuitively by the mind, incapable of being reduced into anything more elementary, and therefore incapable of definition. We suspect that this is the correct representation, *so far as human intelligence is*

concerned. We make this qualification, because we do not mean to decide whether higher intelligences might not be able to fix on some quality or qualities as constituting the essence of the good. But of this we are sure, that all attempted definitions of virtue on the part of ethical writers, have either been utterly defective, or have consisted simply in the substitution of synonymous